2: Stefansson--243
117, 778, 788

(1908-12) 1914

Copper Eskimo

"Ceremonials or Charms. Of ceremonials I saw no trace, nor of charms, though they probably have both. Tan. took a leather thing worn over shoulder and under arm across the breast and back, to be a charm, but I think it was to carry the knife. It is worn between the two coats."

seals. Accordingly, when Ikpakhuak had cut off the flippers of the seal and laid them at the back of the hut, his wife stripped off a little of the skin so that he could drive his knife into the animal's belly. This would please the polar bear, he said, and give him success in his sealing; if he had not done this they would have been angry with him and kept all the seals away. According to Milukkattak the usual custom is to lay a miniature bow and arrow beside only the male bear or wolf; beside the female the hunter places a strip of sealskin or deerskin which the shade of the animal can use as a needle-holder. They are like human beings, Milukkattak went on to say, and have need of the same things, the male of his hunting weapons, and the female of her needle-case.(1)"

"1. Cf. Rasmussen, p.111; Stefansson, My Life with the Eskimo, p. 57, and Anthrop. Papers, A.M.N.H., Vol. XIV, pt.I, p. 353; Boas, Bulletin A.M.N.H., Vol. XV, pt.I, p.124."

1: Jenness--181 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 782, 224

"It behoves the Eskimo therefore to be very careful in all his actions. Not only must he propitiate the shades of the Eskimo dead, lest they should become offended and strive to slay him and to convert him into a tornrak like themselves; but he must never forget to propitiate also the animals he kills. Every seal that is dragged inside his hut must have a little water poured into its mouth, or a little lamp oil instead, for seals are thirsty animals and have a great craving for water (or blubber). Caribou would be given the same, the natives say, only they have not the same strong desire. Geese and other water-fowl, and ptarmigan, all have a longing for oil, so before an Eskimo skins or plucks such a bird he rubs a little fat or blubber on the head, the wing-joints and the feet; but birds of other species have no desire of this kind. Propitiation must be offered to the shades of all fierce and dangerous animals, that is to say of polar and brown bears and of wolves. We shot a polar bear and its cub in the summer of 1915, and Ikpakhuak made a tiny bow and arrow to leave beside the mother's head; he called it a hunting weapon for the bear's shade, and said that a similar gift should be made to the shade of every bear or wolf that is killed. No sewing was permitted on the following day. Moreover, on the last day of the same year, Kesullik, who had been in our party when the bears were killed, captured a seal which he handed over to Ikpakhuak; it was the first seal that had entered Ikpakhuak's house since the slaying of the bears. Now polar bears are like the Eskimos in this respect, that they, too, live largely on

1: Jenness--190 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 782

"Not many years ago what seems to have been an epidemic of some kind carried off a great many Eskimos in and around Bathurst inlet. Ilatsiak told me that close to the shore there was a large rock set up by men long ago among a number of smaller ones. Round this rock he fastened a line, attaching the other end to his belt. Then he spoke to the stone, saying that he did not wish to die, and asking it to preserve his life. When the prayer was ended he gathered six pairs of mittens --two for himself, two for his wife, and two for his adopted son -- and with these in his hands he approached the rock and tied them round it as an offering. In consequence he and his family were preserved when others perished. I omitted to ask him whether the rock was the home of a tornrak, but almost certainly it was."

11: Stefansson--171 (1908-1912) 1913 Copper Eskimo
116, 782

"I was, of course, too far away to hear, but Tannaumirk told me afterward that on the instant of jumping up the sealer began a monotonous noise which is not a chant nor is it words--it is merely an effort to ward off dumbness, for if a man who is in the presence of a spirit does not make at least one sound each time he draws his breath, he will be stricken permanently dumb. This is a belief common to the Alaska and Coronation Gulf Eskimo."

11; Stefansson--295-296 (1908-1912) 1913 Copper Eskimo
116, 776, 782

"At the first Nagyuktogmiut village in April some noise was heard outside our snow-house. Our visitors of the time decided it was our [296] (or my) turnnrak [familiar spirit] and forthwith started a chorus of requests and prayers to me (not to the turnnrak) to have the turnnrak provide plenty seals, good weather, good health, the safe birth of expected children, etc. As we were leaving there was a concerted request by all present that we intercede with the turnnrak for two women, Arnauyak and Anaktok (both young, though only Anaktok recently married--other two or three years) that they might have children born to them."

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

a hunting-knife lashed to the end of a tent-pole. That had been a terrific battle, infinitely more thrilling than our recent chase, for what chance had the two bears against a .44 Winchester? But a bear is a bear, however it is slain, and the joy of my companions was not lessened because the danger had been slight. The species remained as formidable as ever, and its representatives, even when dead, should be treated with caution and respect. So the prudent Ikpuck placed a needle-case beside the mother, and a miniature bow and arrow beside the cub, that they might not travel empty-handed to the spirit-home of their kind.

We camped beside the carcass of the larger bear for three days, enjoying the change from venison to a heavier meat. The dogs, more starved than feasted during the last six months, gorged themselves until they could hardly move. We had meat enough to last a fortnight, yet the hunters wantonly shot three caribou, bringing in only the hides, the back fat, and the sinew. When I remonstrated against such wastefulness they merely said that caribou would always be plentiful, and that they wanted more hides to trade with their neighbours. There was one way in which I could check the slaughter, by threatening to supply no ammunition during the winter to any one who wasted the meat. The threat accomplished more than I had anticipated. They not only brought in one of the carcasses, but presented me with all the marrow-

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783 PURIFICATION AND EXPIATION--practices reflecting a sense of contamination or guilt; concept of ritual uncleanness; things and persons considered unclean or impure; purification rites (e.g., ritual ablutions and bathing); concepts of sin, salvation, and redemption; riddance of sin (e.g., confession, remission, atonement, penance, scapegoat); etc.

See also:

Elimination 814
Personal hygiene 815
Ideas about unclean castes 884
Definitions of acts regarded as sinful 673
Punishment of ritual offenses 688
Conception of pollution, contagion, and loathsome diseases 753
Ideas about corpses 764
Ideas about sexual intercourse 835
Ideas about menstrual blood 841
Ideas about the exuviae of childbirth 844

2: Stefansson--128 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 787, 783

"If a famine occurs, for instance, a shaman will magically inquire from his familiar spirit why the food has become scarce and the answer is likely to be that some member of the tribe has done such and such a thing in secret. A woman member of the tribe may perhaps have eaten the meat from the wrong rib of a mountain sheep. When the spirit informs the medicineman that the woman has done this, he calls upon her to confess that she has done it. If she confesses the famine will end and all will be well, but if she brazenly asserts that she has done no such things as charged with, then the most serious misfortunes will continue to fall upon the people."